

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-68-99

December 29, 1999

The following is offered in response to your communication to this office in which you request a formal interpretation of Section 716.2 of the BOCA National Building Code/1996 portion of the 1999 State Building Code as it relates to a braced frame.

Question 1: Must a braced frame that provides lateral support to the primary structure of a fire-resistance rated building be fire-resistance rated in accordance with Section 716.2?

Answer 1: Yes, if the braced frame supports more than two floors or one floor and roof, or supports a loadbearing wall or a non-loadbearing wall more than two stories high. Since the braced frame is a portion of the building structural system designed to resist vertical and lateral loads, the frame would be considered "other structural members" for the purposes of Section 716.2 and a fire-resistance rating in accordance with the requirements of Table 602 would be required.

Question 2: If required, can the fire-resistance rating be achieved by the individual encasement of a steel stud and gypsum wall?

Answer 2: Any fire-resistance rating system would have to be listed and labeled by an approved testing lab. If there is a steel stud and gypsum wallboard system approved for the fire-resistance rating of structural steel, such a system would meet the requirements of the code.